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Secret Intelligence in the Twentieth Century by Constantine FitzGibbon

(Stein and Day; 350 pp.; \$10.00)

The CIA's Secret Operations by Harry Rositzke

(Readers Digest Press; 273 pp.; \$12.95)

Paul Blackstock

These two volumes are recent additions to a series of books that seeks to rehabilitate the tarnished image of "intelligence" following the disastrous revelations of Watergate and the extended congressional investigations of 1976, which Rositzke refers to as "the Year of Intelligence." Other than this implicit underlying purpose, the two books have little in common. Both authors were engaged in intelligence operations, but Rositzke's work takes on the format of a personal memoir, whereas FitzGibbon has written a popular and often grossly oversimplified account of the role that strategic intelligence played in World War I, in the interwar period, and in World War II.

Starting with the premise that intelligence is a "pitting of wits...which can vary from the competition between friendly gamblers or sportsmen to lethal hostility between states, religions or ideologies," FitzGibbon attempts to evaluate the effect that strategic intelligence (or the lack of it) had on high-level political and military decision-making during two world wars. He served as an intelligence officer at-

tached to General Omar Bradley's staff during World War II and was privy to *Ultra-Secret*, the code word for intelligence that the British came by as a result of having broken the top-secret German communications enciphered by their Enigma machine—communications the German high command mistakenly regarded as unbreakable throughout the war. FitzGibbon properly notes that "the breaking of German ciphers was, for the British and almost equally for the Americans, the war-winning intelligence weapon." For this reason his account is a useful supplement to the authoritative study by Major General Sir Kenneth Strong, *Men of Intelligence: A Study of the Roles and Decisions of Chiefs of Intelligence From World War I to the Present Day* (1971), which was written while the contribution to the Allied victory of *Ultra-Secret* was still guarded under the highest security wraps.

FitzGibbon touches superficially on strategic deception, the cover plans, and massive Allied operations that deceived the German high command during the spring and summer of 1944 and were

thus a major factor behind the successful invasion of Normandy and subsequent German defeat in the West. His deprecating, highly subjective evaluation of the operations contrasts sharply with the glowing, heavily documented account of them by the British journalist Anthony Cave Brown in his best-selling *Bodyguard of Lies* (1976). FitzGibbon ends his survey with a section entitled "The Third World War" (a phrase borrowed from Solzhenitsyn) that is an ill-disguised cold war propaganda tract. It includes a chapter on Soviet espionage and propaganda, "The Early KGB," and another entitled "Some Comments on the CIA."

The author's harsh anti-Russian and anti-Soviet antipathies run like a red thread throughout *Secret Intelligence in the Twentieth Century*. In an early chapter on "The Okhrana" FitzGibbon betrays gross ignorance of the historic Russian scene when he writes: "The Russian masses, illiterate in the last century, live the life of illiterates in this....Even an avowed foreign Communist, such as Pablo Picasso, may not be allowed to show his works to the

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Russian people, lest they be caused to think or at least to question." Fifteen chapters later, in what is apparently meant to be "a chilling exposé of KGB machinations," he writes: "When the Russians realized, in Korea in 1951, that sheer brute strength was not enough, they turned increasingly to subversion. The outcome remains undecided, and the Soviet leaders may yet revert to naked aggression. In which case it may be assumed that they will have learned their Chinese lesson, that their objective will not be a Communist United States remotely controlled from Moscow but rather the physical destruction not only of the American educated classes (as in Poland) but of America as a whole." Since in the same chapter the author writes with disarming candor, "I have no direct knowledge of secret intelligence, in any form since 1946," he might better have left well enough alone, ending his account with World War II instead of marring an otherwise pleasantly informative historical survey with the crudest kind of cold war propaganda that reads as if it were written in the 1950's. The same observation applies to FitzGibbon's sparse, deprecating, and ill-informed chapter on the CIA. Here one is reminded of Pope's evaluation of the verses of Dryden: too mean for comment.

In sharp contrast to FitzGibbon's chronicle, Harry Rositzke's *The CIA's Secret Operations: Espionage, Counterespionage and Covert Action*, with an introduction by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., is very well informed on CIA operations, since it is based on twenty-five years of agency experience in a wide variety of assignments, mainly in clandestine collection (espionage), counterespionage, and covert action. Rositzke discusses the latter under three categories in chapters nine to eleven, dealing with propaganda, paramilitary and political operations respectively. These mixed autobiographical and descriptive sections are followed by "The CIA at Home" (a survey of domestic operations), and "The CIA at Bay," a spirited defense of the agency against "attacks" from the press, especially the *New York Times*, and from various congressional investigations. A controversial final chapter, "The Future of Secret Operations," reads as if it were written by the ghost of the late Allen Dulles, former director of Central Intelligence, whose *The Craft of Intelligence* (1965)

is a classic of institutional advertising for the so-called "cold war mission" of the agency.

In his preface Rositzke writes that the book "naturally focuses on what has been my major professional interest from 1946 on: operations against the Soviet Union, the Soviet intelligence services, and key Communist parties," and that he is mainly concerned to replace ignorance and distortion with fact. Presumably the work is meant to serve as antidote to such critical memoirs as Philip Agee's *Inside the*

Company: CIA Diary (1975) and the analytical study by Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* (1974). This impression is reinforced by Rositzke's candid account of the "severe restrictions" he imposed on himself "in writing this open account"—restrictions so severe that they unwittingly refute his claim that "for the historian it will supply some footnotes to the Cold War, [and] for the student of America's foreign policy a record of the interplay between open and covert diplomacy."

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The clandestine services about which Rositzke writes include espionage, counterespionage, and covert political action. In seeking to put the best possible face on the CIA's clandestine operations, Rositzke both minimizes their scope and, throughout the entire book, takes the line that the CIA acted merely as a faithful servant of the Pentagon in the clandestine collection of "vital" military secrets, or as a loyal tool of the president in its covert operations. In his thoughtful introduction to the work even Arthur Schlesinger, a vintage cold warrior in his own right, takes exception to this kind of special pleading as follows: "While there is some truth in this, I think that [Rositzke] pushes the idea of an innocent and obedient CIA, acting only on 'express' presidential instruction and authorization, a good deal too far. The record, as I read it, indicates that the Agency acted on its own in a diversity of ways, some of very considerable importance."

Rositzke's special pleading leads him into numerous underestimates on the one hand and to gross exaggerations on the other. For example, in his preface he writes that the public record is "unbalanced for the simple reason that CIA's espionage and counterespionage operations...have formed at least eighty percent of the work of all CIA's operations officers from the mid-fifties on. Covert actions have occupied only a small portion of our man-hours...." This patently absurd estimate must certainly come as a surprise to such former operators as Philip Agee, Miles Copeland (*The Game of Nations*, 1963), and John Burkholder Smith, author of a candid autobiographical memoir, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior* (1977). The latter catches the early enthusiasm and later disenchantment with CIA's cold war mission better than any single book of its kind.

The CIA clandestine activities training manual used at the time of the Bay of Pigs fiasco has a wonderfully descriptive phrase warning about "corruption by the tools of the trade." There is also inherent in all clandestine collection services a confusion of means with ends (a point that Schlesinger emphasizes in his preface). Moreover, there is a built-in, inescapable urge to move from collection to covert action, the manipulative syndrome, which has been a major factor impelling both the CIA and its

Soviet alter ego, the KGB, into covert political action around the globe during the cold war. But this is precisely the kind of "forward strategy" that Rositzke recommends in his final chapter on "The Future of Secret Operations." Viewed in the light of what the

Soviets call "stupid bourgeois objectivity," Rositzke's memoir is unwitting testimony that the CIA's covert political actions have been oversold, overused and, at best, in his own words, "can be a useful, if minor, standby for American diplomacy."